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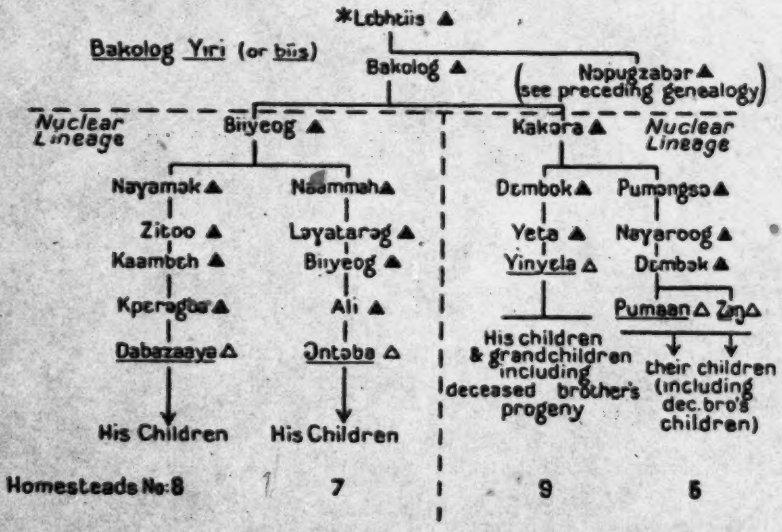
lineage. Lineages are differentiated in terms of their genealogical distance from one another within their common agnatic descent. 613

The whole lineage we have been analysing is often designated Doohraan yidɛm (or biis), by reference to its ancestor, Doohraan; but it is more frequently described as Nɔpugzabɔr yidɛm (or biis), going back to Doohraan's putative grandfather. This lineage is the skeleton of what may be called an expanded family, each of its component effective minimal segments being the foundation, similarly, of a domestic family.[1] [597]

Nɔpugzabɔr yidɛm constitute a major segment of a wider lineage. Homesteads 5, 7, 8, and 9, the closest neighbours of the homesteads of Nɔpugzabɔr yidɛm, are occupied by the various branches of a lineage of the same order as Nɔpugzabɔr yiri. Its genealogical structure is briefly as follows:



[1] Tale domestic organization is analysed in our next volume. Here it is sufficient to say that the modal family unit is the polygynous, agnatic joint family occupying its own homestead. This is the prototypical *yir*, house (pl. *yɔa*). Its typical substratum is an effective minimal lineage of two, or less commonly, three generations. Thus it may consist of two or more brothers (half or full brothers or cousins); or a man and some or all of his sons, and, occasionally, grandsons, together with the wives and young children of all the males. The joint family always constitutes a single jural unit; most often, but not always, it is also a single economic unit. The pivot of this *yir* is its male head (*yirdaana*, owner of the house). He represents the continuity of the patrilineal line in the structure of the family. He is the (patricentral) focus of cooperation and of jural and ritual unity in the family. This is symbolized by the position of the granary in the centre of the homestead and by the reservation of the space in front of the gateway (*zanɔr*) for the affairs of the men. Complementarily, each woman has her own separate quarters in the homestead where her children live under her care, and where she is mistress in domestic affairs. This is her *dug* (lit. room, pl. *dugɔt*); and this is the prototype of the lineage *dug*. Thus the children of the family—that is, the lineage growing out

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613 We have set down only the agnatic affiliation of the heads of the effective minimal segments of the lineage, for the relations of these segments with one another are determined by these ties, not by their respective internal constitutions. The head of this lineage (Bakolog yiri) was Yinyɛla; he died in 1937—a hoary ancient and one of the oldest men in Tongo, at least 75 years of age. He called Ɔntɔba *yaaŋ* (grandson), and Dabazaaya *yaaŋkalee* (great-grandson), and Pumaan, a man in the late forties or early fifties, *bii* (child).

Mutatis mutandis, Bakolog yir has the same internal organization and residential distribution as Nɔpugzabɔr yir, though it is more differentiated.

Nɔpugzabɔr yidɛm and Bakolog yidɛm are two co-ordinate segments (*dugɔt*) of the wider lineage (*yir*) Lɛbhtiis[1] yidɛm. From Deemzeet to Lɛbhtiis inclusively seven generations are reckoned. From Yinyɛla to Lɛbhtiis only six generations are reckoned. This is not fortuitous, for Yinyɛla claims to belong to the generation of Deemzeet's father.

Lɛbhtiis yidɛm include three more *dugɔt*, segments co-ordinate with Nɔpugzabɔr yidɛm and Bakolog yidɛm. These are:—

(*a*) Nɔdɛyɔr yir, the only surviving branch of which comprises but a single segment of narrow span consisting of three full brothers and their children who live in homestead No. 12.

(*b*) Pɔyasɔŋ yir, whose members occupy homesteads 17, 22, 28, 29, and 33.

(*c*) Gbɛn yir, in homesteads 18, 19, 20, 23, 24.

As with Nɔpugzabɔr yidɛm, a count of seven generations, inclusive, separates the heads of these three lineages from their ancestor, Lɛbhtiis. All these segments preserve the names of what appear to be redundant ancestors, like Damtii in the genealogical chart of Nɔpugzabɔr yidɛm. For, in conformity with their structural relations as co-ordinate segments of a single lineage, their particular genealogies must be congruent (see Ch. III). Bakolog yidɛm, with one ascendant generation less in their pedigree, fit into the set on the assumption—which they uphold vigorously—that their head belongs to the generation of the *fathers* of the other segment heads.

We need not analyse the internal organization of these last-mentioned segments of Lɛbhtiis yir. With variations of detail they duplicate the plan of Nɔpugzabɔr yir. The segments are homologous with one another; their sub-segments are constructed on the same plan; and so, on a bigger scale, is the greater lineage which embraces all of them. Bakolog yidɛm within Lɛbhtiis yidɛm, like Zoobɔn yidɛm within Nɔpugzabɔr yidɛm, is relatively senior to its brother-segments, and Nɔdɛyɔr biis, though a segment of a very narrow span compared with the other segments of Lɛbhtiis yir, is nevertheless co-ordinate with them.

[597] of it—are genealogically and socially united by reference to the patricentral *yir* and the patrilineal line, and similarly divided into distinct segments by reference to their respective matricentral *dugɔt*. This is the pattern on which lineage segmentation is based. Again, what is a joint family in one generation generally splits, as the children grow up, into two or more joint families in the next generation. They then constitute what we have called an expanded family.

[1] The founding ancestor, Lɛbhtiis, of this lineage should not be confused with his living descendant of the same name, previously mentioned. In the genealogies given in this chapter Lɛbhtiis the ancestor is distinguished by an asterisk.

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pretext. The point was that he did not wish this land to be lost to his sons altogether; and he therefore took the precaution of getting it back in his own lifetime.

If a man gives land over which he has full rights of disposal to his own sister's son, this amounts to an outright gift. The land belongs to the sister's son and his heirs in perpetuity. This is always explained by the jural fiction that the *ahɔb* (identifying himself with his sister) has, like a father, bestowed a portion of his own land on 'his child'. When the *ahɔb* dies the *ahɔŋ* has the same rights in respect of the share of the patrimonial land allocated to him as the *ahɔb*'s own sons have in respect of any shares he might have given them. It is an application of the rule that siblings are equals. Barimoda and Kpɛlimɛrɔme both had farms given to them on these terms by their mothers' brothers and both said they would never part with their farms. Wherever a branch of one clan is found settled on land coming under the ritual jurisdiction of a neighbouring clan, the origin of the relationship is traced back to such a gift of land. Thus Nɔŋsuur yidem of Tongo occupy and own land under the ritual jurisdiction of the Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra Tɛndaana.[1] They ascribe their rights in their land and the fact that they are living on Zubiuŋ land to their founding ancestor's having been a true sister's son of the Zubiuŋ-Yakɔra Tɛndaana of his time. He was given a very large piece of land by the tɛndaana and came to live there. It is this land that his descendants now occupy.

The Status of an Ahɔŋ as a Foster-child in his Ahɔb's Family

We have mentioned before that a boy who loses his own parents and cannot settle down with a proxy father sometimes goes to live with his mother's brother. A few cases of this sort are found in every settlement. As a rule the boy eventually goes back to his natal home to settle down there; occasionally he settles permanently in his mother's brother's settlement. In any case, he never loses touch with his natal home and never forfeits his rights and status in his own lineage and clan. He does not, as we know, become a member of the lineage or clan of his *ahɔb*. This brings us back to the question of the jural relations of *ahɔb* and *ahɔŋ*.

A boy who grows up in his mother's brother's household is treated exactly like a son and is indistinguishable from a son of the family, to the outsider. Thus it was many months before I discovered that Puvolimra was not the Gbirug Tɛndaana's son but his sister's son. He was probably in his late twenties and had lived with the tɛndaana since boyhood. He continued to farm with the tɛndaana after the latter's oldest son had established his own household. He was, indeed, the tɛndaana's right-hand man, more trusted by him, in some ways, than

[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 59.

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his own sons. More surprising, Puvəlimra was admitted to all the eroteric rites of the Earth cult and often represented the tɛndaana in ritual activities. He was permitted to do this because he belonged to a lineage holding a tɛndaana-ship allied to that of Gbizug. Had he been a Namoo, he would have been excluded from all but the domestic religious rites of the tɛndaana.

He was a great favourite, too, with the tɛndaana's children. But one of the sons once made a revealing comment on Puvəlimra's position. He spoke in a slightly patronizing tone, though not offensively so. 'Puvəlimra', he said, 'is our child (*u a ti bii*). We like him to stay with us and we may not deny him anything. But one day he may decide to go home and we can't restrain him; or if he offends us we can tell him to go. He is not our person (as a member of the lineage is). However much the tɛndaana may like him he cannot inherit our ancestor shrines or our farms or our homestead. It is because he gets on so well with the tɛndaana that he stays.'

This comment is typical of conventional opinion on the position of an *ahəŋ* in the family of his *ahəb*. Puvəlimra himself, Gikoo-Duun, and Bayana, three young men who either lived or had lived with their mothers' brothers, defined their position in exactly the same terms. It would be an offence against the ancestors to deny an *ahəŋ* a home, but he has none of the fundamental rights of a son; his position depends on the personal attachment to him, and concern for him, of his mother's brother. An *ahəŋ* in Puvəlimra's position, it is sometimes suggested, is apt to be more compliant than a son, so as to ingratiate himself with his *ahəb*. He cannot make demands as of right, as a son may do. Said Gikoo-Duun: 'I was a small boy when I went to live with my *ahəb-soog* at Saamər (in Mampurugu). Later I went out on my own to build my homestead and farm for myself near him. It was not because of a quarrel. But my mother's brother will not take care of (i.e. take responsibility for) my affairs (*u ku maal n-yɛla*). He will not marry a wife for me. If he does give me one cow to help pay my wife's bride-price and we should some day quarrel, he will say I must pay it back. He is not of my people. My people are here at Zubiuŋ. Even though I am far away, they (the Zubiuŋ people) will look after my affairs. If I were to die to-day they would make my funeral and inherit my things. Do you not see that I come here (to Zubiuŋ) regularly to sacrifice to my ancestors?'

As we know, one of the major jural responsibilities of a father for his son is in marriage affairs. Hence the fact that a sister's son has no claim, as of right, on his mother's brother's assistance in this important matter is a good test of their jural relations. Puvəlimra's marriage created the first rift between him and his mother's brother. The marriage was beset with difficulties. The girl's father feared that he would never get the bride-price as Puvəlimra's proxy father was a blind old man who lived

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on the charity of his kinsmen and friends. The Gbizug Tendaana refused to promise anything in advance. When at length Puvəlimra succeeded in persuading his prospective father-in-law to give him the girl, all the formalities were carried out by his paternal relatives at Kpatia. Then came the question of bride-price. The demand was made to the head of Puvəlimra's inner lineage at Kpatia, who transmitted it to Puvəlimra himself, since his 'father' was obviously unable to meet it. It was then that the Gbizug Tendaana made Puvəlimra a present of a bull, without, however, assuming any responsibility for handing it over to Puvəlimra's father-in-law. The situation was saved for the time being; but that dry season Puvəlimra went, for the first time in his life, to seek work abroad, hoping thus to earn enough to buy another bull to give to his in-laws.

Sometimes, however, a mother's brother accepts responsibility for the bride-price of the wife of his sister's son who has grown up as his foster-son. A curious situation arises then. For this amounts to adopting the *ahəŋ* into the inner lineage of the *ahəb*. It is as if his mother's bride-price is paid back to his paternal lineage so that he becomes a son of his mother's brother's lineage—much like an illegitimate son. And this is symbolically shown by his children being entrusted to the care of spirit guardians from among his mother's brother's ancestors instead of his paternal ancestors. Though he does not acquire rights of inheritance in his adoptive lineage, the *ahəŋ* settles permanently in the clan settlement of his *ahəb*. He retains only ritual ties with his paternal clan. This is one of the ways in which accessory lineages are founded in clans to which they are related as *ahəŋ* to *ahəb*. At Gbeog, for instance, there are two homesteads occupied by the sons and grandsons of a Gorogo man who came to live with his mother's brother and settled there when the latter paid the bride-price for his first wife. In ritual matters these men still belong to Gorogo. They keep the totemic taboos and funeral customs of Gorogo. When there is a death in their families their Gorogo clansmen come to bury the dead and celebrate the funeral. When the Great Festivals arrive they join with their Gorogo clansmen in celebrating them. But in another two or three generations it is quite possible that their lineage will become an established accessory lineage of Gbeog.

The corollary to the foregoing is that a person's patrilineal kin do not forfeit their rights over him merely because he has grown up in the care of his mother's brother. These rights are often jealously guarded. For example, Nabil, a lad who lived with his mother's brother, one day killed a hare. Instead of delivering the carcass to the head of his own nuclear lineage, as he was bound to do by custom, he brought it home to his *ahəb*. The latter divided the bulk of it amongst the constituent segments of his own inner lineage and sent only one hind-leg to Nabil's 'father'. His reaction was an indignant protest, backed by the other

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members of his inner lineage, at what he called the deliberate flouting of his rights as *biiraan*, owner of the child. A long squabble between the two lineages followed which eventually petered out in a compromise. This may seem a storm in a teacup; it was taken very seriously by a dozen Tale elders.

The outstanding example of the retention of patrilineal rights is found in the case of a girl who grows up at her *ahəb yiri*. Whatever her personal relations with her father's lineage may be, it is they who receive the placation gifts and the bride-price when she marries. The *ahəb*'s share is only the 'cow of rearing'.

Cases of girls living as foster children at their *ahəb yiri* up to marriageable age are uncommon. I knew of only one girl who was living with her *ahəb* and would probably not be taken back by her father's people before she reached marriageable age. A girl living with her mother's brother is usually there because she was sent to her maternal grandmother in early childhood owing to the death of her mother. She may be left there until she is 11 or 12, but she is then generally fetched by her father's people. A boy has more freedom. He cannot be forced to return to his paternal home if he does not wish to do so.

An interesting reflection of the conventional ideas on the relations of an *ahəb* and his foster *ahəŋ* is found in the story commonly told of how certain politico-ritual offices came to be transferred from one clan to another. The tale is so stereotyped that it can be regarded as a standard myth. It is alleged of several of the lesser chiefships that they were originally vested in different clans from those that now hold them—usually clans that are closely related to the present holders by local or ritual ties. The last chief of the original line, the myth relates, had his sister's son, a member of the clan now holding the chiefship, living with him. The chief put great trust in his *ahəŋ*; and, either because he had no sons or because his sons were indifferent to politico-ritual affairs, the chief always delegated his *ahəŋ* to represent him. Thus, he used to send the *ahəŋ* as his messenger whenever he had to communicate with the senior chief who was the elector to that chiefship. In this way the *ahəŋ* became known to the elector. When his *ahəb* died he hastened stealthily to the elector with the news, taking lavish gifts along with him. Knowing him so well from their previous contacts and persuaded by the rich gifts he brought, the elector thereupon immediately conferred the chiefship on him. Thus the chiefship came into the possession of its present holders. A similar story is told to explain the dominant position of the lineage of Lakum yiri in the politico-ritual structure of Ba'ari, in spite of their being an attached lineage.[1]

When it is pointed out that such actions are contrary to custom and would not be allowed at present, the natives have two answers. Firstly, they say, unscrupulous people never hesitate to break a customary rule

[1] *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 88.